

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are pending. Claims 2-9 are withdrawn. Claims 10-16 are newly added. Claim 1 is amended. Support for the amendment to Claim 1 and for newly added dependent Claims 10-12 can be found in the specification on page 16, lines 7-20, for example and on page 17, lines 24-27, for example. Support for newly added Claims 13-16 can be found in Fig. 2 and in the specification on page 13, line 24-page 16, line 1, for example. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by MacCaskill et al. (U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0028504, herein "MacCaskill").

Applicants elect Group I, Claim 1, for further prosecution on the merits. Newly added Claims 10-16 are also part of the elected group. Claim 1 is amended and recites, in part:

a plurality of first microconduits extending in a first direction and a plurality of second microconduits extending in a second direction different from the first direction, which are formed in the base material,
microspaces formed at respective intersections of the first microconduits and second microconduits, the microspaces including a cell supporting part configured to support cells, but permeable to liquids.

Accordingly, the microspaces include a cell supporting part. The cell supporting part is configured to support cells. The cell supporting part is permeable to liquids.

In contrast, MacCaskill fails to teach or suggest a cell supporting part in any part of its microreactor network, much less a cell supporting part configured to support cells, but that is permeable to liquids. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over MacCaskill for at least the reasons discussed above.

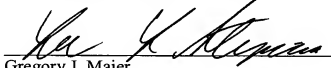
Newly added dependent Claims 10-16 depend from amended independent Claim 1 and patentably distinguish over MacCaskill for at least the same reasons as amended independent Claim 1 does.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1 and 10-16 is earnestly solicited.

Should Examiner Archie deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, Examiner Archie is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)

Lee L. Stepina
Registration No. 56,837